

The Significance
of Historical Landmarks
in Ashley County

by
Janet Etheridge

English IV
Mrs. Carpenter
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Thesis: Historical Landmarks of Ashley County show the history and personality of the county. However, many landmarks lose value because their history remains unrecorded and the past is forgotten.

- I. Historical landmark is an event marking an important stage of development or turning point in history.
 - A. Some historical landmarks have no known history.
 - 1. The old Portland Church is an example of a landmark with no known written records.
 - B. Some landmarks have known history.
 - 1. Three landmarks which have historical significance in Ashley County are Longview, Hamburg Presbyterian Church and the Rose Inn in Crossett.
- II. Longview claims age distinction.
 - A. Longview was first a river town.
 - 1. Some reasons why Longview was settled were because of trapping and that it had such a good location on the river.
 - B. Longview was the first known permanent white settlement in Ashley County.
 - 1. Longview was first settle permanently in 1840.
 - 2. Some of the first permanent settlers worked with farming, trapping, and river jobs.
 - 3. Direct forefathers from Longview has passed down stories from generation to generation.
 - 4. Their is records of the age distinction in the History of Ashley County by Y. W. Etheridge.
 - 5. Railroads marked the coming of the end of the first known life as it was lived as a rivertown.
 - C. A head stone marker marks the site of the settlement.
- III. The Hamburg Presbyterian Church was the first formed Presbyterain Church in AShley County.
 - A. The church was formed because a group of Presbyterians worked hard to prove they needed a church in Ashley County.
 - 1. Some people who were so determined were J. F. Ramsaur and William Harbison.
 - B. The Ouachita Presbyterian constituted the church.
 - C. The church was organized in 1859.
 - 1. The land for the church was given to them eventually by Mrs. J. W. VanGilder.
 - 2. The church building was erected in 1871 by the able church members.

D. A history of the early church and through the years was recorded.

1. Faith held the early Presbyterians together.
2. These people (Presbyterians) helped Ashley County find a new growing religion.
3. This early church is still active in Hamburg.

IV. "Cap" Gates built the Rose Inn as a monument to his dream.

A. Some back history of Crossett up to this time will tell "Cap" Gates dream.

B. The first Rose Inn was built in 1912.

1. Mr. Gates named it for his wife, Rose.

C. The first Rose Inn burned in 1913.

1. An overheated pipe started the fire throughout the middle of the Inn.

D. The second Rose Inn was finished in 1914.

1. The Rose Inn was one of the most popular Inn's for almost 70 years.

E. The Rose Inn was closed in 1973.

1. The insufficient accommodations of the Inn to modern hotels and motels caused it to be shut down.
2. Pieces of the Rose Inn were sold in an auction sponsored by the Jaycees.

F. The Rose Inn still lives on.

1. The Rose Inn lives on in recorded history and in the heart of the people.
2. Chris Jones owns a cabin built out of the old wood of the Rose Inn.
3. The Crossett Library has the mysterious windows found when the Inn was being torn down.

V. For many reasons landmarks are important to Ashley County.

A. Written records are our only connections with the past.

B. Having basely the same ancestors bring people closer together in beliefs and customs.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HISTORICAL LANDMARKS
IN ASHLEY COUNTY
Janet Etheridge

Historical landmarks are very important to Ashley County. A landmark is an event that marks an important stage of development or a turning point in history. Landmarks could be buildings or just a site having historical significance.¹

Some landmarks have no known history. Many times this happens because people just want take the time to write records of places and things that happen. This is carelessness on the part of the people. For instance, on the old Portland road stood an old church once a familiar landmark but now the site is bare. Now nothing remains of this church except the memory of an old building that once stood.²

In consolation to the happenings of unrecorded history, there is always the history that has been well preserved. These buildings and sites are what is known as historical landmarks.

Three landmarks which have historical significance in Ashley County are Longview, The Hamburg Presbyterian Church and the Rose Inn in Crossett.

¹American Hertage Dictionary of English Language
(American Heritage Publishing Co. Inc., 1969)

²"Old Portland Church," Ashley County Ledger, March 4, 1973, p. 1.



ONCE A FAMILIAR LANDMARK on the old Portland road this old church has crumbled and the site is now bare. More than a year ago photographer Linda McCay captured what

must have been a melancholy moment for this old building in its declining days. The LEDGER was unable to obtain historic information on the former place of worship.

Longview, on the Saline River, is the first French settlement in Ashley County of which there is now any trace.¹ Some historians believe that Longview is the oldest established community in Ashley County. According to Mrs. W. B. deYampert, whose ancestors helped settle Longview. Longview was settled as early as 1769 or 1770. But this wasn't a permanent settlement, for many years Longview was just a handy "embarking" point where trappers and traders stopped off before heading for the trading mart which later became the prosperous city of Monroe, La.

It was around one hundred and fifty miles from Longview to Monroe. Imagination would not be strained to realize what a long, arduous and usually dangerous journey it was under primitive circumstances. The current moved the early traders down the river fairly fast, but it was still hard for voyagers to master the river in the river crafts of that era.

Grand Marais, Fille Haut, LaPile, Marais Saline, Cheminahaut, La Aigles, Stillions and Johnsville are the names of some of the towns marked by the wanderings of these bold, courageous men enroute to Longview.

Most of the terrain is yet wild and unspoiled, to the outdoor lovers this general area is a delight. Many of the same wildlife that greeted the French still haunt the sector and the hunting and fishing is superb.

¹Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas (The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1890); p. 876



Downstream view of Saline River is afforded by bridge on Highway 160.

SUNDAY, MAY 7, 1967

It is no wonder that the romantic nature of the gay-spirited trappers caused them to choose Longview as a permanent landing and stopover. This spot overlooks one of the most picturesque river scenes in the state.

At the point where Longview is, the Saline is particularly deep and wide. The name, Longview, is accounted for because this is probably the longest and straightest stretch of the river.¹

A pioneer settlement was suitable for Longview because it was such a beautiful site. It was also the main center of transportation for areas on both sides of the river. Three roads led into Longview in different directions.

In 1840, Longview began its permanent existence according to James A. Wheeler. William Wheeler, born in Louisiana, married Miss Martha Phillips, born in North Carolina, and they were the father of James A. Wheeler, a sketch of whose life appears in Goodspeed as a prosperous farmer in the Longview community in 1890, and is considered one of the permanent founders of the town.

During this time the village grew rapidly using the river as a base to most jobs and points of money making. Life during this time strived around being a river town. Some of the people that lived in Longview at this time had various jobs. In 1846, Phillip Durton set up in Longview a mercantile business and owned a general store. He built a warehouse and also brought hides and furs from trappers

¹Glenn Martin, "Longview Claims an Age Distinction," Arkansas Democrat Magazine, May 7, 1967 p. 5.

to sell at the market. There was also a two story Methodist Church. The top floor was used for a lodge room of the Hyperion Lodge No. 48, F. & A. M.

James A. Wheeler was a merchant and a farmer owning 101 acres in 1850. He was also a raftsmen who floated logs down the river to the market.

Phillip Durton held a number of important positions in the community. He had 104 acres of land and owned the finest two story store in town. Mr. Durton was Internal Improvement Commissioner until he died.

By 1860 there were three other merchants; W. W. Woods, Clark Morris, A. B. Wood; a doctor, L. L. Martin; an engineer, Jeff Bromley; a tutor, John Loughram, and a balance of the population farmers. Also, Robert J. Withers was a boat captain.¹

Mrs. Mary P. Wells remembers a story handed down to her through the generations first told by Captain Withers. Apparently during these years carpetbaggers were a problem, as the story goes, one or the slaves got word that carpetbaggers were heading down the river. Through the turmoil of loading the cotton and other cargo on the ships, they findly eased toward New Orleans saving it all from the carpetbaggers.

Then the railroads came. The railroads took the business away from the rivers which were the main arteries of

Y. W. Etheridge, History of Ashley County, Arkansas, (The Press-Argus, Van Buren, Arkansas, April 1959) p. 160-162.

commerce. In 1883 a sawmill, gin and gristmill was installed in Longview. Most of the captains the railroads run broke, so as the railroads came and better transportation the river town grew more into the town of Longview as life is now known.¹

Longview is a favorite place now for fishing and other water sports. A number of vacation cottages have been constructed in the areas along the stream.

Undoubtedly, Longview is one of the most idyllic spots on the river for aquatic activities. The waters still remains deep, cool and navigable for considerable distances even during the hottest, driest weather.

The more permanent residents of Longview included the Lamberts, Downeys, Haskews and Withers. Most of these family names still are prominent in Ashley County and south Arkansas.²

But the real reason for Longview to become a historical landmark comes from the settlements of 1769 or 1770 made by two families the Fogle's and Buleet's who claimed to have been located in Longview. After some years later, the Acan's came and together with the other families and their children they constituted the white people of Ashley County

¹Y. W. Etheridge, History of Ashley County, Arkansas, (The Press-Argus, Van Buren, Arkansas, April 1959) p. 162

²Glenn Martin, "Longview Claims an Age Distinction", Arkansas Democrat Magazine, May 7, 1967, p. 5.

for perhaps three-quarters of a century.¹

A marker now takes note of the historic beginnings of Longview. The marker was erected by Col. Francis Vivian Brooking Chapter of DAR, and reads as follows:

LONGVIEW

ONE OF THE FIRST COMMUNITIES
IN ASHLEY COUNTY SETTLED BY
THESE FRENCH FAMILIES
FOGLE, BULEET, ACAN,
CARCUFF, LaBEUF &
PEDRON
THESE WITH THEIR CHILDREN
CONSTITUTED FOR THREE QUARTERS
OF A CENTURY THE WHITE PEOPLE
OF ASHLEY COUNTY
Erected by
Col. Francis Vivian Brooking Chap. of DAR
Ethel Haskew Walker Chapter Historian

Another landmark which has historical significance in Ashley County is the Hamburg Presbyterian Church. The Hamburg Presbyterian Church was the first formed Presbyterian Church in Ashley County.

In early years before the church was organized many members of Presbyterian Churches emigrated in 1850 to 1860 from other states in Arkansas. These people brought with them the confession of faith and continued steadfastly in their religion although there had never been a Presbyterian Church or preacher in the county. These Presbyterians attended Methodist and Baptist churches, but still taught their

¹Glenn Martin, "Longview Claims an Age Distinction," Arkansas Democrat Magazine, May 7, 1967, p. 5

²Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas (The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1890) p. 876



Marker takes note of historic beginnings of area.

own doctrines and beliefs, Sunday Schools in which they were trained.

They accepted the situation and made the best of surrounding circumstances, but they felt as if they were in a trackless desert, without the bread of life.

No situations in life can seem to more fully try the faith and make Christians feel more dependant upon the "Divine Power" to a greater extent than to be placed in those situations. The condition existed until the year 1859 when two members: J.F. Ramsaur and William Harbison attended the spring meeting of the Ouachita Presbytery that was held at Scotland Church in Southwest part of Union County. After making known the situation and desires of the Presbyterians in Ashley County, the Presbytery made an order appointing Rev. A. L. Crawford, and able preacher who resided in Bradley County and Rev. Boozier, pastor in a church in Pine Bluff to visit Ashley County and investigate the situation and if circumstances were favorable to clear the way to organize a church.

The meeting was to take place in May or June of 1859 at the Baptist Church in Mill Creek township in Ashley County known by the name of Holly Springs Church. There was a good congregation that met. When the meeting was called to order the appointed minister preached a sermon. After the sermon, the roll was called to see how many members were accounted for. Sixteen persons could furnish "evidence" of membership and they were immediately organized into a Presbyterian Church, and were given the name of Orion Church. William Harbison, J. H. Johnston, J. F. Ram-

saur and W. S. Lawson had been ordained as Ruling Elders in other churches, so they were elected as Ruling Elders in Orion Church.

In 1866 the Ouachita Presbytery ordered the name of the church to be changed from Orion to Hamburg Presbyterian Church, and the location was changed from Mill Creek township to Hamburg, Arkansas.

J. H. Johnston who was clerk of the session kept the records in his law office in Hamburg. During 1865, an Osborne force of Federal soldiers numbering six thousand made a raid in the southeast part of Arkansas and set up headquarters in Hamburg. Johnston's office was made main headquarters and either the records were destroyed or carried away.

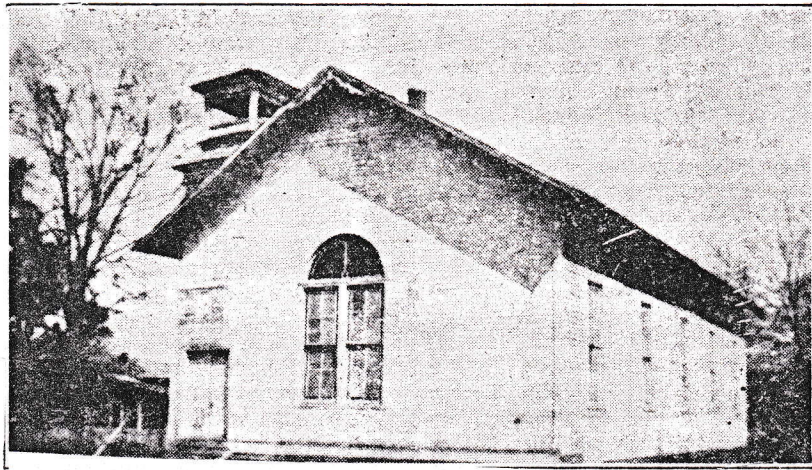
W. F. McCombs was elected to the Hamburg Church as a ruling elder, and J. W. VanGilder was ordained as the first deacon of the church.¹

Mrs. M. E. VanGilder, widow of J. W. VanGilder, on April 19, 1909 sold Hamburg Lot Number 18 with the elders of the Presbyterian Church as Grantee.² But a few years later after she had only recieved very little interest she decided to give the land to the church.

In 1871 a few able members of the church erected a good church building. In this same year the church called

¹ W. S. Lawson, History of Hamburg Presbyterian Church, wrote about one-half the book.

² Ashley County Direct Index D: 1909-1915, Ashley County Courthouse, Circuit Clerks Office.



HAMBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Rev. Henry More to be pastor.¹

In July of 1902 Rev. H. L. Paisley became the first full-time pastor with a salary of eight hundred dollars a year. During his ministry forty members were added to the church. Through the ministry of Rev. C. H. Maury, their next pastor, the church role hit the one hundred mark, but since then it has gradually declined in number.

On October 31, 1908 a new life begin, indorsed by the session a young peoples society called the westminister's League of Christian Endeavor was organized. This organization was very helpful to the young people of the church and in March of 1909 the session approved another organization.

This organization is the Constitution and Works of Women's Church and Missionary Society, commonly known as Ladies Aid and Missionary Society until 1920 when its name was changed to Ladies Auxiliary.

The Ladies' Auxiliary was a great spiritual uplift to the church and it functioned with or without a pastor.

Since 1909 the church remained as it was built with the exception that a partition has been put in, making the auditorium much shorter. Also one other change was made, the balcony for the choir later used by the colored people has been abandoned and the Sunday School rooms were put in front under the old balcony.

The original church membership was sixteen in 1859. It is wonderful to think of the faith these first Presby-

¹Ashley County Direct Index D, 1909-1915, Ashley County Courthouse, Circiut Clerks Office.



terians must have had. They traveled a rough and rocky road with many stumbling blocks landing in their pathway.¹ At the present day there is about fifty members of the church which are a credit to Hamburg as well as Ashley County. These Presbyterians lived with extreme faith in God and this is the reason why the Hamburg Presbyterian Church first came into existence and became a historical landmark in Ashley County.²

Of all the historical landmarks to be picked from in Ashley County, the Rose Inn's is a landmark that marks an important stage of development or a turning point in history, a monument to one man's dream, it symbolized a different kind of life.

On May 16, 1899 the final papers forming the Crossett Lumber Company was signed in a lawyer's office in Little Rock. At this time Crossett was "raw" and new, the streets were simply rutted tracks over newly cleared strips of land.

"Cap" Gates was the manager of the lumber company and the dynamic heart of the community. At this time the first women and children had just moved into the sawmill town. Cap Gates had plans for Crossett.³

The Rose Inn owes its start to the Old Crossett Lumber

¹History of the Hamburg Presbyterian Church

² Janice Clark, "History of Crossett Arkansas" Bicentennial Almanac 1776-1976, Crossett, Arkansas, p. 1

Janice Clark, "History of Crossett Arkansas" Bicentennial Almanac 1776-1976, Crossett, Arkansas, p. 2



MAIN STREET in Crossett 1900. The houses, only half of which have been painted in this picture, are located in the area now occupied by the business district of the city. The Number One Mill is dimly seen at the far end of the rutted "street."



Burned 1913 — Rebuilt immediately
Torn down 1973

Company.¹ It was to symbolize a community of gentle people with gracious manners. The first Rose Inn was built in 1912 ordered to be built by "Cap" Gates and was named after his beautiful wife, Rose. The Rose Inn was a three-story, 45-room inn with a wide porch that spanned the front of the building. The porch was separated from the dirt street by a wrought iron fence to keep out hogs and cattle that wandered through town at will until in the late 1940's a stock law was passed prohibiting, the wanderings of animals. The inn was cooled by ceiling fans with louvered doors to encourage circulation of air in the upper floors and "buzz" fans were used in the summer.

A professional chef and some negro waiters were brought down from Little Rock by Mr. Gates to stay a year and teach the local staff to cook, wait tables and perform other services for the inn.

This Rose Inn was short lived on Nov. 9, 1913 it caught afire and burnt to the ground. The fire was started when a vent pipe leading from the basement furnace through all three floors to the roof had become overheated. On that Sunday night the fire started right through the heart of the new inn, creating a commotion that sent men to house roofs as far as two blocks away, pouring buckets of water on the Inn.

This wasn't the end to "Cap" Gates dream. The new inn was built by the original plans and looked much the same as the old one.

¹Clayte Whitten, (staffwriter), "Crossett Landmark to Fade", Crossett clippings file.



E. W. "Cap" Gates, first manager of the Crossett
Lumber Company, who built the Rose Inn



Rose Gates, for whom the Inn was named

The Rose Inn was amost beautiful site, the foundations for many years were banked with countless rose bushes completing the atmosphere. The Rose Inn became a favorite "oasis" for traveling business men,¹ as well as, providing recreation and social life for large gatherings and clubs.²

The Christmas dinner menu of 1914 showed some of the class the Rose Inn possessed. It read as follows:

Giblet Soup Anglais, Olives, sweet pickles, Escalloped oysters, roast young turkey with sage stuffing, baked yams, mashed white potatoes, spinach with egg, cranberry jelly, Christmas salad, frozen grape juice punch, english plum pudding with hard sauce, nuts and raisina, oranges and apples, white and dark fruit cake, cheese and crackers, coffee. Dinner 50 cents.

Meals that were served regularly were a little less elaborate. Meals were served in a big dinning room accented by electric lights which were clusted above which hung in bell-shaped globes of frosted glass with milk glass shields to deflect and soften the light. Dinner was served promptly at 6 p. m. each evening.

The Nov. 1961 issue of Ford Times, published by Ford Motor Company, featured the Rose Inn is the section "Favorite Recipes of Famous Taverns". The Rose Inn held a forty year reputation for fine foods and hospitality. In the late 1940's the Rose Inn was given the Duncan Hines seal of

¹Janice Clark, "The Rose Inn" The News Observer, April 19, 1973.

²Y. W. Etheridge, History of Ashley County, Arkansas, (The Press-Argus, Van Buren, Arkansas, April 1959) p. 180

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The Rose Inn, a monument to one man's dream

special approval for it's quality food.¹

The enlarged school and increased number of people in the 1930's brought about the policy that all unmarried school teachers were required to live on the third floor of the Rose Inn. These teachers were expected to be a model of rectitude for the community by the school administration. They were permitted no cardplaying, no dancing, and no smoling and also were expected to attend church every sabbath. Because of such strict expectations, some of the girls slipped down the fire escape and her and her boyfriend slipped back in the back door and danced in the butlers pantry.

Young men were allowed to come calling on the girls, but they were either confined to the lobby or the wide front porch of the Rose Inn.²

Over the years the Rose Inn became known as "the finest Hotel in Southeast Arkansas," and the "Undisputed social center of Crossett."³

In 1962 Georgia-Pacific Corporation acquired the Rose Inn. The Rose Inn was held together more with memories and nostalgia than by structural strenght over the past decade or more. The Rose Inn could no longer make adjustments for

¹Janice Clark, "The Rose Inn" The News Observer, April 19, 1973

²Janice Clark, "History of Crossett Arkansas" Bicentennial Almanac 1776-1976, Crossett, Arkansas, p. 2

³Clayte Whitten, (staffwriter), "Crossett Landmark to Fade," Crossett Clippings file.



The lobby of the Rose Inn, where a sewing circle met each week to rock and sew and chatter. Models in style shows paraded down the stairs, and songfests were held around the upright piano

central air-conditioning, sound-proof walls, color television, baths in every room, and other modern demands.¹

Because of the " inability to keep the fine old structure in the repair it deserved and to make needed renovations at a reasonable cost," Luke Newell, hotel manager, and John Turner, public relations official for Georgia-Pacific, Incorporated, owners of the facility announced that May 1973 was the closing date for the Rose Inn.

The old Rose Inn was known far and wide for accommodating private dinners and club meetings.² It was fitting that the last luncheon for the community organization at the inn was served on Saturday, May 5, to the oldest club in town, the Crossett Book Club organized in 1937.

The Rose Inn was a host for over seventy years to radiant brides, sock hops, solemn business meetings, community dances, courting couples, family reunions, sewing and bridge clubs, parties of the men and women who cleared the forest to make way for the mills, homes and streets of Crossett.

The shadow of Edward Woodward "Cap" Gates and of the men and women who pioneered Crossett stretches thru the years and still points the way for the growth of Crossett.³

On some Friday and Saturday night in 1974 everything was auctioned off in lots by the Crossett Jaycees.⁴ The

¹Janice Clark, "History of Crossett Arkansas" Bicentennial Almanac 1776-1976, Crossett, Arkansas, p. 2

²Clyte Whitten, (staffwriter), "Crossett Landmark to fade, " Crossett Clippings file.

³Janice Clark, "History of Crossett Arkansas" Bicentennial Almanac 1776-1976, Crossett Arkansas, p. 2

⁴Lewis Carter, President of Crossett Jaycees, Crossett, Arkansas, personal interview, January 28, 1977.

total sold both nights¹ combined was in excess to 1200 dollars and all proceeds went to the Carousel School.²

It is only fitting that after all the Rose Inn symbolized that in many ways it still lives on. Of course recorded history and the memories of people would lead the way, but also the Rose Inn lives on material wise, too.

One way is that the Crossett Library has the beautiful stained glassed window of the long-stemmed rose. This rose was mysteriously discovered when the building was being torn down. Heavy paper was removed from the stairway wall when a section of wallboard was moved, light streamed through the window uncovering a story no one has yet to tell.

Even the people of Crossett who lived in Crossett before the Rose Inn was built can not remember ever seeing the Rose. It's conjectured that when Rose Gates died in about 1923 nine years after its construction her husband, "Cap" Gates, set the window in the building as a memorial to her. But if this being so, it must have been short-lived. Some of the teachers who lived in the inn in 1925 never remember seeing the window. The window was in such a obvious place that no one could have missed it had they ever used the stairs. So as far as that goes, the story behind the window obtains

¹Thomas N. Pierce, G. P. District Manager's assistant, personal interview, February 2, 1977.

²Claude Riley, Jr., personal interview, January 27, 1977.

private meaning to some one.¹

Another way the Rose Inn lives on is that when the Jaycees had the auction in 1974 Chris Jones bought the old virgin pine logs that were cut out in about 1910 for the construction of the Rose Inn.

What Chris Jones did with these logs has significance in itself, one could not think of a better way to use the old wood of the Rose Inn except in building a log cabin. And that is just what he did! He built a 12 foot by 16 foot log cabin with the roof shingles made out of other wood from the Rose Inn.²

So the Rose Inn does live on never to completely died for to Ashley County it was a symbol of a different kind of life. If Crossett had not become the town it is today and followed the behavior of most sawmill towns the affects would scar the surrounding areas. But thanks to "Cap Gates" and the young men and women who fought to live a dream we know life as it is today.

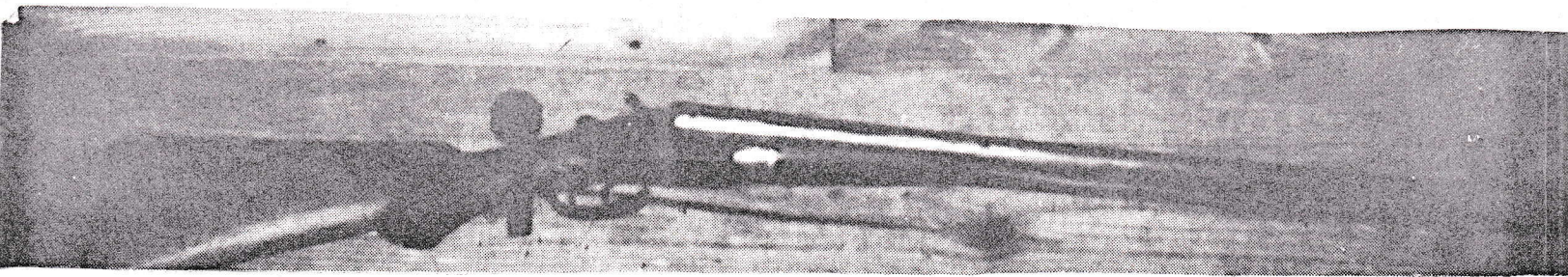
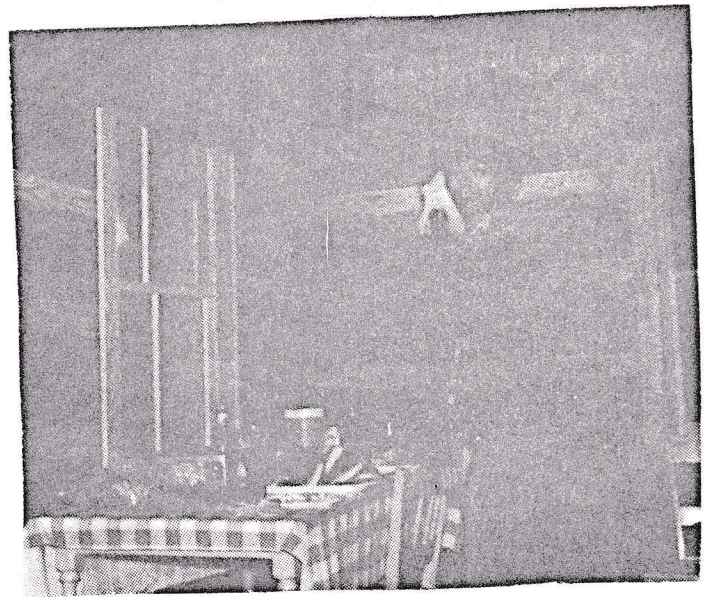
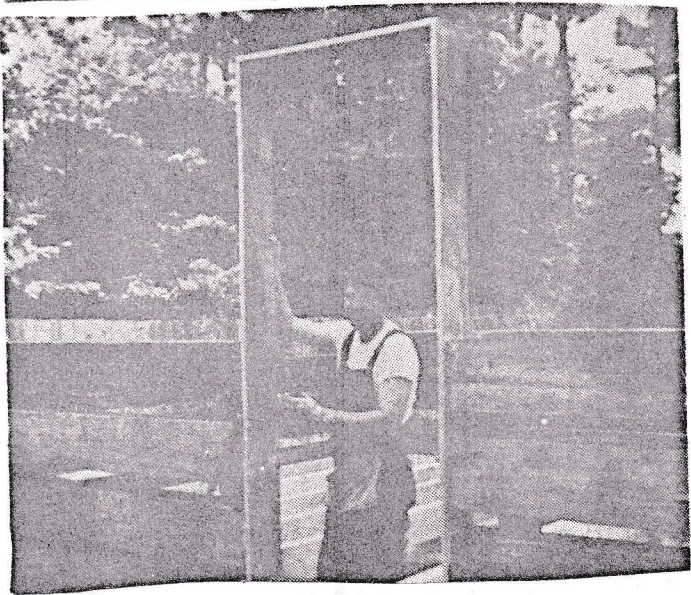
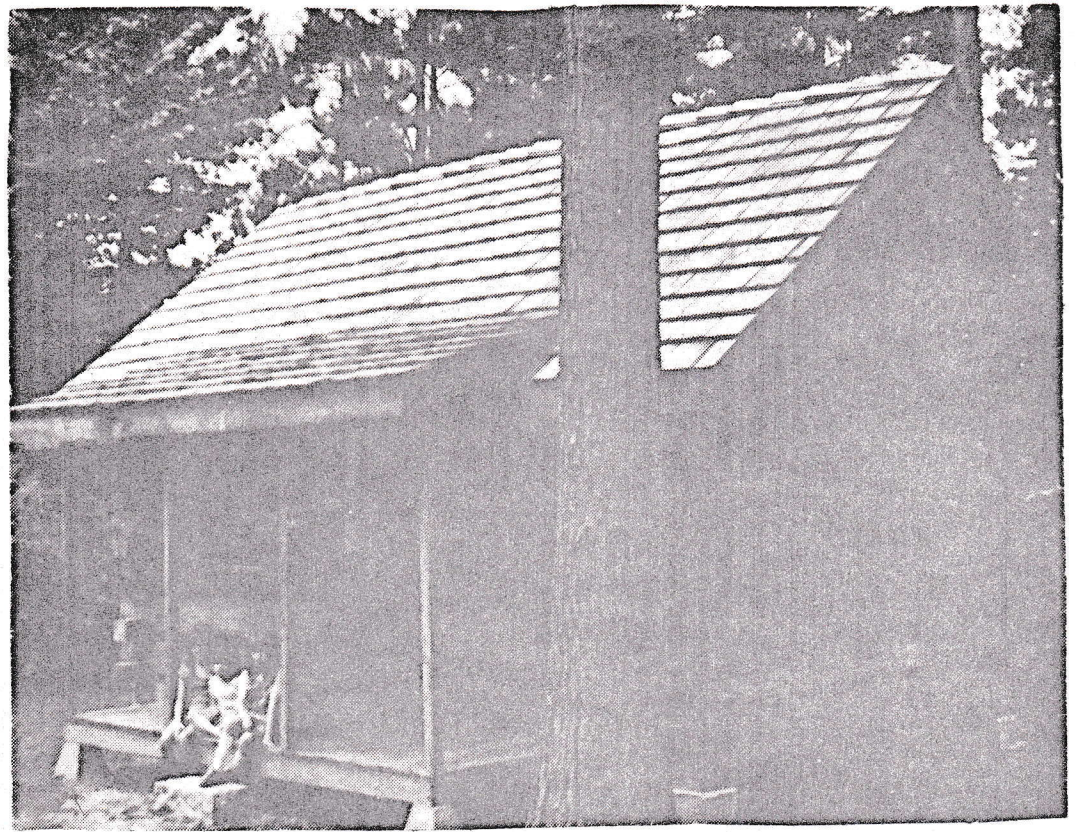
So one can see for many reasons historical landmarks are important in Ashley County. History is important to record. It is nice to know who did what for Ashley County many years ago, and what their motives were.

Written records are the only link to the past, the only

¹ "Rose Inn" the News Observer, framed in the Crossett Library.

² Roger Hill, "The Rose Inn Lives On" The Ashley County Ledger, Vol. 8 No. 11, November 25, 1976.

The Rose Inn Lives On



link to the past, the only way people have of knowing who they are or why people act the way people do. History holds two basis of our beliefs and customs. These are only a few reasons why historical landmarks are very important to Ashley County. But the point most to be remembered is that historical landmarks do have significance and should be well preserved.

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- p 13 Hamburg Presbyterian Church -(top) History of Hamburg Presbyterian Church, (bottom) Photo by David Moyers.
- p 15 Hamburg Presbyterian Church - Photo by David Moyers.
- p.17 Main Street of Crossett and Old Rose Inn- Bicentennial Almanca 1776 -1976 Crossett, Arkansas
- p. 19 "Cap" Gates New Observer April 19, 1973.
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